



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contacts: St. Louis Symphony Orchestra: Eric Dundon | ericd@slso.org, 314-286-4134

National/International: Nikki Scandalios | nikki@scandaliospr.com, 704-340-4094

**ST. LOUIS SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA ANNOUNCES
NEW FOUR-YEAR CONTRACT FOR MUSICIANS**

**Agreement, reached one year prior to expiration of current contract,
covers 2026/27 through 2029/30 seasons**

(September 4, 2025, St. Louis, MO) – The St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (SLSO) and the American Federation of Musicians, Local 2-197, announced an agreement on a new four-year contract for SLSO musicians today. The agreement provides continued stability for the SLSO, which is entering its 146th season and the reopening of its historic venue, Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center. The new contract runs from September 1, 2026, through August 31, 2030, and was ratified one year before the expiration of the current contract, which runs through August 31, 2026.

Highlights of the new four-year agreement include:

- Annual compensation increases for orchestra musicians over the life of the contract, including a \$10,000 increase to salaries in the contract's first year, followed by increases of 3%, 3.25%, and 3.5% in the subsequent years, reaching musician base pay of \$128,036 in 2030.
- Structural changes to evening rehearsals, allowing greater flexibility and increased capacity for orchestral programs involving chorus and community partners as well as the expansion of the SLSO's community partnership programs, reflecting the musicians' commitment to performances throughout and engagement with the community.
- The formation of an Audition and Tenure Task Force to review and recommend revisions to orchestra hiring practices.

Marie-Hélène Bernard, SLSO President and CEO, said, "This new agreement is an investment in the musicians of the SLSO, who are the very heart of the organization, and reflects our shared commitment to the future of the orchestra, and its ability to best serve our community. As we anticipate welcoming audiences back to our beloved Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center this month, we are pleased to look forward to a new era with the stability this new agreement provides. The new contract reflects the extraordinary contributions of the SLSO musicians and empowers the organization to continue to embody its mission to enrich lives through the power of music. Together, we achieved this mutually satisfying agreement a full year in advance—a testament to the genuinely collaborative spirit of the orchestra's negotiating committee, their counsel, and the AFM Local 2-197. We are grateful to all—musicians, and SLSO



Trustees and staff—who directly supported the bargaining process, and we are eager to reconnect with audiences as we launch the SLSO’s celebratory, historic 2025/26 season.”

Henry Skolnick, Chair of the St. Louis Symphony Musicians’ Negotiating Committee and SLSO Associate Librarian, said, “After many years of collaborative efforts to strengthen the financial foundation of the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra, the musicians—together with the American Federation of Musicians Local 2-197—are pleased with the announcement of ratification of a new agreement. This milestone reflects the vitality and forward momentum of the SLSO as we return to our cherished Powell Hall. We believe this agreement will support the entire organization as it continues to serve as a beacon of excellence in the symphonic world, both in St. Louis and internationally.”

The SLSO will begin its season on September 17 with the orchestra’s annual concert at Forest Park, the orchestra’s 146th season and Stéphane Denève’s seventh as Music Director. The 2025/26 season serves as a milestone moment for the orchestra with the reopening of Powell Hall at the new Jack C. Taylor Music Center following a transformational, two-year expansion and renovation project. Opening Weekend at the venue is September 26-28. In addition to Opening Weekend concerts, special events and a vast range of concerts celebrate the opening of the Jack C. Taylor Music Center and honor the centennial of Powell Hall. These events showcase the transformation of the venue, inviting guests to experience the grand and welcoming architecture, as well as rediscover the magic that has made Powell Hall an internationally recognized concert hall.

About the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra

Celebrated as one of today’s most exciting and enduring orchestras, the St. Louis Symphony Orchestra is the second-oldest orchestra in the country, marking its 146th year with the 2025/26 season and its seventh with [Stéphane Denève, The Joseph and Emily Rauh Pulitzer Music Director](#). Widely considered one of the leading American orchestras, the Grammy® Award-winning SLSO maintains its commitment to artistic excellence, educational impact, and community collaborations—all in service to its mission of enriching lives through the power of music. The transformational project that expands and renovates the orchestra’s historic home, Powell Hall—designed by Snøhetta and creating the Jack C. Taylor Music Center—will be completed in September 2025. This milestone builds on the institution’s momentum as a civic leader in convening individuals, creators, and ideas, while fostering a culture welcoming to all. For more information, visit slo.org.

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